

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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The New York Sun and Those Elusive Alger Serials

By Stanley A. Pachon



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 164

RICHMOND'S (SENSATION) NOVELS

Publisher: Richmond & Co., 113 Nassau St., New York (for first few numbers. No. 14 has New York address, No. 22 has Boston). Box 83 and later Box 183, Boston, Mass. Issues: 156 (highest number seen advertised). Schedule of issue: monthly. Dates: May 1871 to March 1884. Size: 6½x4¼". Pages: 100 to 110. Price: 10c. Illustrations: black and white pictorial cover. Contents: Sensational romances with a smattering of westerns. The Series name was changed from Richmond's Sensation Novels to Richmond's Novels between Nos. 12 and 22. The earlier numbers were later reprinted with the new Series name so that those bearing the series title Richmond's Sensation Novels are extremely rare.

The New York Sun and Those Elusive Alger Serials

By Stanley A. Pachon

It has always puzzled the writer why more of the foremost Alger collectors have never stumbled over these first long serials Alger wrote. It was assumed by all that the group of five titles published in book form by Loring between 1864 and 1866 were Alger's first long works, but such was not the case. The writer had uncovered these forgotten serials over 20 years ago, as an old ad in the Roundup will attest. Just recently in a published bibliographic work five of the titles were listed as short stories!

As an introduction to the description of these Alger serials, a brief synopsis of the paper would be quite apropos since the original publisher, Benjamin H. Day was responsible for originating and introducing the newsboy on the American scene and was to be the mainstay of so many Alger stories.

Benjamin H. Day who is credited with publishing the first permanent and successful penny newspaper, spent his early life learning the printer's trade. At the age of twenty he was considered a first class compositor.

It was while working on the Journal of Commerce, a fellow compositor by the name of Dave Ramsey gave Day the idea of a penny paper, a newspaper which would contain human interest stories and items, not the dry political and commercial news carried by most of the newspapers of that day. Soon after, Day taking his savings, launched himself as a job printer, but unfortunately 1832 was a depression year and all business suffered. Day decided to improve his job printing business by issuing a small newspaper which would carry his own ads as well as those of other business men. With items he culled from other newspapers and some original material and with the help of a young boy and a journeyman printer, on September 3, 1833 a thousand copies of his paper were printed. He named the paper the "Sun." The size of the paper was 8x11¼ inches and of four pages.

On the second day's issue, Day inserted a brief ad which read as follows, "To the unemployed—a number of steady men can find employment by vending this paper. A liberal discount is allowed to those who buy to sell again."

Before this there were no newsboys and no papers were sold on the streets. All the newspapers were sold over the counter, while subscribers had theirs delivered. Day's innovation changed all of this and his idea of bringing the paper directly to the customer on the street proved highly successful and soon found many imitators. The first person to apply for the job was a ten year old unemployed boy named Bernard Flaherty who later in life was to be known as "Barney Williams," the Irish comedian. Unquestionably, Bernard Flaherty has the distinction of being the first newsboy. When Day began to get regular subscribers he put carriers on the routes. He charged them sixty-seven cents per hundred papers if paid cash and seventy-five cents if on credit.

It was at this time Day acquired a reporter and editorial writer who

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later became Day's partner. For four dollars a week, George W. Wismer also agreed to get up every morning at 4 o'clock and attend the police court for any human interest stories that would develop. Wismer stayed on in his position until 1835 when due to ill health his interest was bought by Day for \$5,000.

Richard Adam Locke then became Day's editorial writer and reporter and was paid twelve dollars a week. It was Locke who conceived and carried out the sensational "scoop" which was later called the "moon hoax." Locke's vivid description of the flora and fauna and the winged "moon people" were supposedly based upon the sights seen through the new telescope by Sir John Herschel at the Cape of Good Hope. The avid interest displayed by readers sent Day's circulation figures to a point that it surpassed all competitors in the daily field here and abroad. Although there was some skepticism among the papers, they all avidly copied Day's "beat."

In 1839 Day sold his paper to his brother-in-law, who had been associated with him prior to the sale for three years. Moses Y. Beach, the new owner, was a noted inventor. With his taking over the paper he introduced many innovations. He never spared expenses in getting the news the fastest to his presses and scooping the other metropolitan papers.

In 1841 Beach was reporting an incident which could have involved the U. S. in a war with England. This was the so-called Caroline incident. McLeod, one of the participants in the affair was, as he returned to New York, seized by the authorities and placed on trial for the murder of Amos Dunkel. The hostile action of the British ministry for his release cast an ominous pall over the country. The trial, being held in Utica, New York, Beach hired a train to carry the news to Schenectady where a famous drive with a team of fast horses carried the news to the Albany boat and down to New York City. The Sun was first on the streets with the news.

When Beach constructed his new office building, he built a pigeon loft on top of the building as he used carrier pigeons to bring the news to his paper, sometimes gaining many hours on his competitors.

In 1844 Edgar Allen Poe through the pages of the Sun reported as fact, a balloon crossing the Atlantic in three days. This too created a sensation but of briefer duration than Locke's "moon hoax." Although castigated by the rest of the press for his "hoax," Beach replied that the item was only intended as a satire and not a factual piece.

In 1845 Moses Y. Beach took his sons, Moses S. and Alfred E. in as partners. The sons more talented than their father in the field of invention stayed as partners until the elder Beach retired in 1848. Moses S. Beach who had, with Orson D. Muir bought the Scientific American which they jointly ran. When he sold his interest in the Sun in 1868 he became more closely associated with the Scientific American until his death in 1896.

Such was the Sun when Alger began to contribute his serials. The paper had a circulation of 59,000 a day of which 45,000 were distributed in New York City and vicinity. The Sun up to this time always produced a profit. The high mark of this period was over \$42,000 a year.

The elder Beach established the Weekly Sun. This was published on Saturdays and contained the most important news of the week plus the reprint of the serials running in the Daily Sun. The weekly was intended for country circulation and sold for a dollar a year. In 1848 he also established the American Sun which was shipped abroad for overseas circulation. Another venture of his was the Illustrated Sun and Monthly Literary Journal, a sixteen page magazine full of woodcuts.

At his office he also sold all the latest novels in cheap editions and authored a book called "The Wealth of New York: A Tale of Wealth and the

Wealthy citizens of New York City who are estimated to be worth one hundred thousand dollars or over, with brief biographical notices." This sold for 25 cents and enjoyed a brisk sale. Indeed, Moses Y. Beach was a versatile man. He is also considered as the father of the newspaper syndicate.

Horatio Alger, Jr.'s first long serial in the Sun appeared under the pseudonym of "Charles F. Preston." Prior to its appearance it was advertised quite heavily not only in the Sun but in other local papers. The New York Dispatch in the issue of January 25, 1857 under "New Publications," listed "Hugo, the Deformed in the New York Sun," and the issue of the Dispatch of February 1, while the serial was currently running, stated, "Hugo, the Deformed written expressly for the Sun by Charles F. Preston." The serial, "Hugo, the Deformed" was a horror story, pure and simple and written in the best tradition of the horror story. The principle character, Hugo Ring, an embittered and implacable hunchback, after many dark deeds commits suicide at the conclusion of the story by stabbing himself in the heart.

It is easy to understand why Alger selected a pseudonym to go with this story. This was a kind of a story that was being condemned by some clergymen from their pulpits and in some sections of the press as demoralizing its readers. Another factor which could have influenced him was his decision to enter the Harvard Divinity School in September of that year, and to have advertised the fact that a student for the ministry wrote such stories that were being condemned would not have enhanced his reputation or his standing in the religious community.

Another factor that impelled Alger to write these stories was a financial one. The income from short stories was negligible while a serial commanded greater remuneration and with the additional income from short stories helped him defray his expenses as a student at Harvard. From 1857 to 1860 when he graduated, Alger contributed nine serials to the Sun, but of a much milder nature than the first one.

It would be quite apropos to mention here that Louisa May Alcott, to augment her income would let her imagination run wild and her serials appeared in the Flag of Our Union under the pseudonym, A. M. Barnard. This was in 1865.

The reception to the serial, Hugo, the Deformed, must have been lukewarm and this may have been one reason that this was the only Alger serial that was not reprinted in the Weekly Sun.

Alger could write vivid descriptive narratives as the first paragraph of "Hugo" would indicate.

"The business of the day was at length over. Night brought with it a temporary cessation from toil, and a period of quiet which could not be otherwise than grateful to those exhausted energies of the wearied multitudes, who had been on the alert from the early dawn."

With this description Alger lays the ground work of his story, which moves rapidly from incident to incident culminating in the suicide of Hugo Ring or "Hugo, the Deformed."

1. Hugo, the Deformed, by Charles F. Preston.

January 27, 1857, issue No. 7674, to

February 7, 1857, issue No. 7684

Alger's second serial to the New York Sun must have impressed the editor as it was much more heavily advertised than was the former serial, "Hugo." A few days before the appearance of the serial, the editor had this to say:

"Madeline, the Temptress.

A new tale of great interest and vigor

Written expressly for the columns

of
The Daily New York Sun
by
Horatio Alger, Jr. Esq.
of Boston."

The notice in the August 2, issue of the New York Dispatch carried this blurb:

"The greatest tale ever written, 'Madeline, the Temptress,' by Horatio Alger, Jr." and in the August 12 issue of the same paper there was this descriptive announcement as the serial was running in the New York Sun:

"Alger's new tale which is now being published in the New York Daily Sun is receiving unmistakable evidence of public admiration. In writing this story—Madeline, the Temptress—for the columns of the Sun, Alger has surpassed himself, and will now undoubtedly rank in the public estimation as a story writer. Everybody, young and old, should read this tale, which exposes the arts of a cunning woman to rend from a virtuous wife her husband, whom she adores. Read it."

The principal characters in this serial were:

Madeline Baretti, the temptress

Major Victor Effingham, the husband and prize of the struggle

Millicent Effingham, the wife.

The first line of the serial reads: "It was approaching the close of a beautiful day in June 1835."

2. Madeline, the Temptress. A Tale of Two Continents
by Horatio Alger, Jr.

August 7, 1857, issue No. 7830, to

September 3, 1857, issue No. 7853.

And reprinted in the Weekly Sun

August 22, 1857, issue No. 1130, to

September 19, 1857, issue No. 1134.

Alger's third serial did not appear until the middle of 1858, but prior to this time he had enrolled in Harvard's Divinity School in September 1857. After getting settled and organizing his studies, he again took up his pen, but he may have had second thoughts or qualms as to his name appearing as the author of these stories. In submitting his story he may have requested from the editor the cloak of anonymity, explaining his reasons. This was granted evidently with a great deal of reluctance as it was the policy of the Sun to give credit to the authors for their contributions. This was in part to forestall accusations that the paper printed old English serials, as many publications were doing. The Sun prided itself in giving full value to its readers.

It must have puzzled some of the steady and observant readers of the Sun that the serial, "The Secret Drawer," by the author of "Madeline, the Temptress, Hugo, the Deformed, etc." was by one author. Recalling that the year before, "Hugo, the Deformed" appeared as by Charles F. Preston and "Madeline, the Temptress" as by Horatio Alger, Jr., Esq., must have concluded that this was an editorial mistake or printer's error. But by indirection the editor gave away the secret that Preston was Alger. Other contributory evidence has also come to light which definitely prove that Preston and Alger are one.

The first paragraph of "The Secret Drawer" starts with these words:

"Our story opens in New York. In one of the narrow streets leading to the East River, there stood some twenty years since, a shabby shop, occupied by one Solomon Finch, a pawnbroker, as might be gathered from an unsightly sign as well as from the nondescript contents of the shop, as seen through the

dirty windows."

The principal characters were:

Rose and Nellie Greyson; William Clare

3. The Secret Drawer; or, The Story of a Missing Will, by the author of Madeline, the Temptress, Hugo, the Deformed, etc., etc.

June 14, 1858, issue No. 8096, to

July 5, 1858, issue No. 8114

reprinted in the Weekly Sun

July 10, 1858, issue No. 1176, to

July 31, 1858, issue No. 1179

The fourth serial appeared toward the end of 1858. Alger started his story thus:

"It was drawing towards the close of the last day of the year, a few hours more and 1836 would be no more."

This serial was published by A. K. Loring, Boston in book form in 1866. This and Helen Ford were intended as adult stories and not as juveniles.

The principal characters were:

Timothy Crump; Rachel Crump; Dick Humphries; Reg Hardwicke

4. The Cooper's Ward; or, The Waif of the New Year, by the author of Madeline, the Temptress, The Secret Drawer, etc.

December 8, 1858, issue No. 8246, to

January 8, 1859, issue No. 8263

Reprinted in the Weekly Sun

December 18, 1858, issue No. 1199, to

January 22, 1859, issue No. 1204

Alger's fifth serial appeared in the spring of 1859. The story began as follows:

"Thomas!"

"Down here, Uncle."

"Come to my bedside, I have something I wish to say to you."

The action revolves mostly around three central characters:

Thomas Somers, who is the villain of the plot and

Herbert Selden and Julia whom Selden marries.

With this serial Alger is again credited as the author.

5. Herbert Selden, the Poor Lawyer's Son, by Horatio Alger, Jr., author of The Secret Drawer, Madeline, the Temptress, The Cooper's Ward, etc.

March 5, 1859, issue No. 8320, to

April 12, 1859, issue No. 8352

Reprinted in the Weekly Sun

April 2, 1859, issue No. 1214, to

May 7, 1859, issue No. 1219

1859 promised to be a busy literary year for Alger. In fact it had already started when in November 1858, Gleason launched his new publishing venture. Gleason who had published The Flag of Our Union and Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion, had for some reason been forced to sell his publications to his editor, Maturin M. Ballou and to abstain from entering the field while Ballou was active. After a few years of steadily falling circulation, Ballou dropped his renamed Ballou's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion and sold the Flag of Our Union and his own inspired Ballou's Dollar Monthly. Gleason feeling he had fulfilled his obligations, was free to enter the publishing field again.

Alger who must have been aware of the circumstances of Gleason's withdrawal from publishing and being very partisan would not send any contributions to the Ballou publications. The only original items published of Alger's contributions were items acquired prior to the changeover.

The first issue of Gleason's Weekly Line of Battleship appeared November 6, 1858 and carried a poem by Alger titled, "The Fountain of Youth," and for the remaining issues of the year and those for 1859 Alger contributed 58 stories. In fact Alger had become so prolific that some issues carried two stories by him, one under a pseudonym.

Scarcely had Alger's serial, "Herbert Selden, the Poor Lawyer's Son" had been concluded when the Sun began a new serial by Alger, his sixth after only a six week interval. The serial starts as follows:

"An old man with shambling gait, might have been seen, late in the afternoon of an October day, shuffling along the sidewalk of an obscure street in New York."

The principal characters involved in the story are:

Eleanor Winsor and her son Charles as well as

Manson, the Miser.

6. Manson, the Miser; or, Life and its Vicissitudes, by Horatio Alger, Jr., author of The Cooper's Ward, The Secret Drawer, Madeline, the Temptress, etc., etc.

May 18, 1859, issue No. 8383, to

June 21, 1859, issue No. 8412

Reprinted in the Weekly Sun

June 11, 1859, issue No. 1224, to

July 9, 1859, issue No. 1228

This serial was rewritten by Alger and was published by Loring as Charlie Codman's Cruise in 1866.

The seventh serial by Alger in the Sun started in the middle of August with the following lines:

"Han-nah!"

The speaker was a tall, pompous looking man, whose age appeared to cover close upon fifty.

The principal characters were:

Squire Benjamin Newcome; Harry Conant; Dr. Humphries;

Felipa Morna, an evil character

7. The Gypsy Nurse; or, Marked for Life, by the author of (preceding stories).

August 15, 1859, issue No. 8458, to

September 14, 1859, issue No. 8484

Reprinted in the Weekly Sun

September 3, 1859, issue No. 1236, to

October 15, 1859, issue No. 1242

This story, too was rewritten and juvenilized by Alger and published as Paul Prescott's Charge by Loring in 1865.

There were no other serials by Alger published in the Sun in 1859. The three serials, the 60 or so short stories for Gleason, as well as other scattered pieces added to his studies kept Alger more than fully occupied. This appears to be Alger's most productive year.

In February of 1860 appeared Alger's eighth serial. The introductory paragraph reads as follows:

"A young man walked slowly up the steps of an aristocratic mansion, situated on one of the principal streets in New York."

The principal characters were:

Isabel Bartow, the heiress

Henry Marshall, the hero

Col. Chatham, Isabel's guardian

It is fairly simple to deduce the plot from the title and the list of characters.

8. The Mad Heiress, by Horatio Alger, Jr.

February 3, 1860, issue No. 8605, to

March 2, 1860, issue No. 8629

Reprinted in the Weekly Sun

February 25, 1860, issue No. 1261, to

March 24, 1860, issue No. 1265

Alger's ninth and last serial in the Sun appeared about two months later. Alger began his story as follows:

"Not many minutes walk from the City Hall situated on one of the cross streets intersecting the great thoroughfares is a large building not especially inviting in its aspect, used as a lodging and boarding house."

The principal characters are:

Helen Ford; Robert Ford, her father; Mother Merton; Mr. Sharp, Robert Rand

9. The Discarded Son; or, The Cousin's Plot, by the author of (list of preceding titles).

April 26, 1860, issue No. 8675, to

June 6, 1860, issue No. 8710

Reprinted in the Weekly Sun

May 12, 1860, issue No. 1272, to

*June 23, 1860, issue No. 1278

*(The issues containing the conclusion of Sun Weekly reprints were missing. An estimate on the possible date has been worked out from past reprinted serials. It is possible the date could be June 30).

With this serial Alger's contributions to the Sun ceased. With graduation from Harvard Divinity School in the offing, and plans for a European jaunt in the preparatory stage, time was at a premium, but he did keep up his short story contributions to Gleason's Line of Battleship.

Alger, for some reason, in later years never revealed his contributions to the Sun. Whatever the reasons for this secrecy can only be surmised. If he was ashamed of the type of writing he should not have been. Among the contributors contemporary with him were some of the better known story tellers of their time. One can mention a few, L. Augustus Jones, Mary Jane Holmes, Mrs. Mary A. Denison, Mrs. Ann S. Stephens whose "Malaeska" was to launch the first of the Beadles Dime Novels, T. S. Arthur of temperance writing fame, William H. Bushnell who also wrote for Beadle, Joseph Holt Ingraham who wrote as F. Clinton Barrington and "Lil." "Lil" was also used by Waterman L. Ormsby, Jr. who wrote serials under that pseudonym and under the initials of "O, Jr." wrote such works as "Cycloidal Configurations" and others. It can't be denied that Alger was in good literary company.

The End

The Edward S. Ellis Stories Published by The Mershon Complex

By Denis R. Rogers

(Conclusion)

A. L. Chatterton Company : New York

When Charles H. Peck retired at the end of 1909 the firm's name was changed to The A. L. Chatterton Company and the four Jayne tales were sold to The A. L. Burt Company.

Although A. L. Chatterton continued to publish the other twelve Ellis titles in the final Mershon Company format (i.e., lad reclining on ship's rail whilst reading a book cover design), minor textual abridgements were made at the end of some tales (e.g., "Through Jungle and Wilderness," "Down the Mississippi" and "Up the Tapajos"). Some titles were reprinted without textual change (e.g., "From the Throttle to the President's Chair," "The Telegraph Messenger Boy" and "Tad; or, 'Getting Even' With Him"). Until the following titles are located in A. L. Chatterton Company editions (i.e., with A. L. Chatterton at the foot of the title page) it cannot be determined whether the texts were subjected to any abridgement: "Lost in Samoa," "The Land of Wonders," "The Life of Kit Carson," "Lost in the Wilds," "Red Plume" and "A Waif of the Mountains."

The A. L. Chatterton Company became insolvent in 1915 (The Publishers Weekly No. 2256, dated 1 May 1915, reports the fact), but I doubt whether the firm was still publishing books by Ellis as late as that year. By 1st January 1912 Grosset & Dunlap were selling an edition of nine of the Chatterton Ellis titles at 40c each, as against the 60c per volume being asked by A. L. Chatterton. Then in 1913 Hurst and Company introduced a similar cheap edition of the other three Chatterton Ellis titles, namely the three volumes making up The Great River Series.

Clearly by the beginning of 1912 Grosset & Dunlap had not acquired sole publication rights from A. L. Chatterton, unless such a sale had been made subject to Chatterton being permitted to go on offering for sale such stocks as remained uncleared.

"The American Book Trade Directory—1971-72" (R. R. Bowker Company, New York, N. Y.), records in Section IV, under Former Publishing Companies, that The A. L. Chatterton Company was acquired by The Platt & Nourse Company. Actually the acquisition of the defunct business must have been by that firm's predecessor, The Platt & Peck Company. The reader is referred to the section of this article below about Hurst & Company for further information about The Platt & Peck Company.

The A. L. Burt Company : New York

A. L. Burt founded his book publishing business about 1887 and incorporated The A. L. Burt Company with his three sons in the spring of 1902. Albert L. Burt himself died on 28 December 1913 at the age of 71. The firm continued in existence for many years, being acquired eventually by Blue Ribbon Books, who were taken over by Garden City Books, which was in its turn taken over by Doubleday & Company Inc. ("The American Book Trade Directory, 1971-72" : Section IV : Former Publishing Companies : R. R. Bowker Company, New York, N. Y.).

The A. L. Burt Company's connection with the Mershon Complex is confined to the four Lieut. R. H. Jayne tales, which Burt acquired from The Chatterton-Peck Company, when Charles H. Peck retired. Burt is better known to Ellis collectors for the other ten titles published under the author's true name in many editions between 1887 and about 1923. He is also well known as a publisher of books by Horatio Alger, but the scope of this article limits me to describing the editions in which Ellis' War Whoop Series were issued by Burt between 1910 and about 1919.

The Wide Awake Boys Series (a catalogue series title that first appeared in the Burt catalogue for 1910 at 75c per volume and continued to appear in the Burt catalogues up to 1919 at 60c per volume (1911-1915), 40c per volume (1916) or 50c per volume (1917-1919)) had an attractive format featuring candy stripes on the spine and a picture in pastel colors pasted on to the front cover. The pasted on pictures seen are not identical and are not ap-

appropriate to the tales to which they are linked. Moreover I have an idea that different pictures may have been used for copies of the same title, although I have not been able to prove it by a direct comparison: that idea is based on copies seen of "A Jaunt through Java," which was also published in The Wide Awake Boys Series.

"Lost in the Wilderness" was also catalogued by Burt in a Rugby series for Boys edition between 1920 and 1923. At the time of writing this article no surviving copy of that edition has been located.

Hurst and Company : New York

This firm, which became well known for cheap mass book production of better quality—better that is by comparison with the products of its great rival, M. A. Donohue & Company of Chicago—was founded in 1871 by Thomas D. Hurst.

By 1912 Hurst & Company was sharing premises with The Platt & Peck Company at 395 Broadway, New York. It is a reasonable presumption that the two firms were at least financially associated. In March 1917 The Platt & Peck Company changed its name to The Platt & Nourse Company (Publishers Weekly No. 2355 : 24 March 1917) and was still sharing accommodation with Hurst & Company, but now at 354 Fourth Avenue, New York. Next in July 1920 The Platt & Nourse Company became The Nourse Company (Publishers Weekly for 17 July 1920). In 1920 Hurst & Company and The Nourse Company were both located at 114 East 23rd Street, New York and by 1924 The Nourse Company appears to have absorbed Hurst & Company, whose name has disappeared from the trade directories. The Nourse Company was still at 114 East 23rd Street. By 1926 The Nourse Company had been absorbed by The Platt & Munk Company, which is still in business, so far as I am aware.

The above evidence that Hurst and The Platt & Peck Company (and its successors) were associated is supported by the existence of "Lion Jack" by P. T. Barnum with Platt & Nourse as the imprint on the title page and Hurst at the foot of the spine (copies in the collection of the writer and of Mr. Pachon of Bethlehem, Pa.)

The publication rights in "Lion Jack" and the two other Barnum tales, which may also have been ghost written for the Great Showman by Edward S. Ellis, were acquired by The Platt & Peck Company when the previous publishers, The G. W. Dillingham Company, went bankrupt in 1916 (Publishers Weekly No. 2326 : 2 September 1916). The Dillingham business as a whole, however, was bought by The J. J. Little & Ives Company as a going concern (Publishers Weekly No. 2325 : 4 November 1916).

As in the case of The A. L. Burt Company, Hurst's connection with The Merston Complex is confined to a few titles, although it is better known to Ellis collectors for the reprints in hardback book form of a dozen of the author's early dime novels for Beadle & Company, for an immensely popular life of Theodore Roosevelt, entitled "From the Ranch to the White House," and for about half a dozen other titles.

The titles which concern us in this article are those comprising the three volume Great River Series, the rights in which passed from The A. L. Chatterton Company to Hurst. Hurst & Company used many different formats, apparently more or less indiscriminately, and so I cannot be sure that the format described below is the only one in which "Down the Mississippi", "Up the Tapajos" and "Lost in the Wilds" were issued by the firm. As I write it is the only format, which has come to my notice: details of any other Hurst formats applied to any of those titles, which are found by readers, would be welcomed by me.

The design on the spine of this edition shows a young horseman on a galloping horse linked to a picture of another young rider, who is also twirling a lasso from the back of a racing steed, pasted on to the front cover. This picture has a background of hills and a predominance of yellow in the coloring. It is the most common of the twelve known Hurst formats.

The Charles C. Thompson Company : Chicago

In the Business Notes section of *The Publishers Weekly* for 19 June 1909 (No. 1951) the dissolution of the Thompson & Thomas partnership by mutual consent was announced, C. C. Thompson taking over all the assets of the publishing business as The Charles C. Thompson Company.

No surviving copy of a book with a Charles C. Thompson Company imprint has been found, but the list of Ellis books in print on 1st January 1912 includes the following four titles with the firm as publisher: "The Boy Captive," "Lone Wolf Cave," "Ned in the Mountains" and "Red Plume." If or when copies do come to light it would not be surprising to find the cover formats to have been inherited from the former partnership, since at least two were used later by M. A. Donohue & Company. "Ned in the Mountains" was a new Ellis title, but was almost certainly no more than a change of title for "Through Apache Land," since a subsequent Donohue edition of that work, with "Ned in the Mountains" as the sub-title, has been found. The possibility that, prior to disposing of the publication rights to M. A. Donohue & Company, The Charles C. Thompson Company merely sold off stocks of existing Thompson & Thomas editions cannot be ignored. Again such a possibility can never be proved, but could be disproved by the discovery of a copy of any of the four titles with the imprint of The Charles C. Thompson Company on the title page.

The Publishers Weekly for 7 February 1914 (No. 2192) contains an obituary of C. C. Thompson, who had died on the 3rd of the month. So far as I can ascertain the publication rights in the four Ellis titles did not pass with the business generally to Stanton & Van Vliet (described as successors by 1917 in an edition of "The American Book Trade Directory" no longer available to me), but were acquired by M. A. Donohue & Company, possibly after Mr. Thompson's death.

M. A. Donohue & Company : Chicago

Michael A. Donohue emigrated from Ireland to Philadelphia at the tender age of eight in 1849. The family moved to Chicago in 1856 and during the next five years young Donohue learned bookbinding.

In 1861 he became a member of a firm of bookbinders, Cox & Donohue. After being wiped out in the great fire of 1871 that firm was succeeded by Donohue, Wilson & Henneberry, which later became Donohue & Henneberry.

A judicial action to dissolve the partnership was initiated in the early part of 1900, but the differences were resolved and the business continued (*Publishers Weekly* No. 1462 and 1464 : 3 and 17 February 1900). Presumably the firm was now called Donohue Brothers, since it was under that name that the entire stock of plates and sheets of The W. L. Allison Company of New York was purchased shortly afterwards (*Publishers Weekly* No. 1472 : 14 April 1900).

About a year later (*Publishers Weekly* No. 1522 : 30 March 1901) Donohue purchased the entire interest of W. P. Henneberry and the firm became M. A. Donohue & Company.

Despite a serious fire (*Publishers Weekly* No. 1827 : 2 February 1907) the firm prospered so that, by the time Michael A. Donohue died on 5 October 1915 (*Publishers Weekly* No. 2280 : 16 October 1915 prints an obituary), the

company was firmly established as a mass producer of cheap books.

Under the guidance of Donohue's four sons the firm continued to publish books for many years, before being acquired by The Hubbard Press (The American Book Trade Directory, 1971-72 : Section IV—Former Publishing Companies : R. R. Bowker Company, New York).

This article is concerned only with Donohue editions of the four titles taken over from The C. C. Thompson Company and "The Life of Kit Carson," although Donohue also published poor quality editions of ten of the short tales for the very young, which Ellis wrote specially for the English magazine "Little Folks." It seems likely that the rights in "The Life of Kit Carson" were acquired from The American News Company, since Donohue also reprinted that firm's other Ellis title, "The Star of India." What is beyond question is that Donohue did not have exclusive rights to any of the five works referred to above, the known editions of which are described below.

The only known Donohue edition of "The Boy Captive" has the same format as that used by Thompson & Thomas, which has already been described. The cover cloth color is carmine red.

The only known Donohue edition of "Red Plume" also has the same format as that used by Thompson & Thomas, except that all reference to The Camp-Fire Series has been dropped. The cloth color is crimson.

"Through Apache Land," as published by Donohue, has a picture of a wooden shack at the top of a ravine on the spine and a cover design consisting of a crudely drawn picture of a young frontiersman gazing round some rocks at a wolf, which is walking through some ruins. The cloth color is olive.

The earliest Donohue edition of "Lone Wolf Cave" has a fox's head in the center of the spine and another crude cover design; this one depicts two extremely young hunters on horseback, with rifles, amidst a wooded rocky scene. The cloth color is olive.

The probable publication date of the above four editions has been estimated as between 1912 and 1914, as the titles are not recorded in the U. S. Catalog of Books in Print at 1st January 1912; the year depends upon whether the publication rights were acquired before or after the death of C. C. Thompson early in 1914. An inscription in a copy of "The Boy Captive" in the Rogers Collection points to 1913, although it must be admitted that that inscription is suspect, being merely an untidy scrawl.

A reprint edition of "Lone Wolf Cave" in the same format as that described above, except for a deep green cover, has been located. This edition was probably published in 1919, if a clipping from "The Chicago Herald" for 24 December 1919, which was found in a copy on its acquisition for The Rogers Collection, can be accepted; anyway it is the only available evidence. This edition has an additional 26 pages containing an anonymous story, "Bears and Dacoits. A Tale of the Ghauts." Henty enthusiasts will recognize the title instantly as from the pen of that popular English author of historical tales for boys. The first book edition of "Bears and Dacoits" is recorded in the British Museum Reading Room as having been published by Blackie & Son of London in 1896 (48 pages).

A third Donohue edition of "Lone Wolf Cave" has a plain emerald green cloth binding, apart from the lettering, except for a fox's head on the front cover. The probable publication date has been established as 1933 on the evidence of advertisements of other books being offered by Donohue, which are bound in at the back of the volume.

There are four known Donohue editions of Ellis' biography of Kit Carson. The earliest, entitled "A Singular Escape; or, Kit Carson among the Indians" appeared around 1906 as No. 87 of The Flashlight Detective Series. There is no publication date shown in this booklet, but an advertisement at the back

for Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup includes the legend: Guaranteed under the Food and Drugs Act, June 30, 1906. Serial number 1098. That information was omitted from advertisements in other Donohue volumes, which can be identified as having been published in later years and so it is a reasonable presumption that, as the syrup became better known, reference to Food and Drug Act approval was no longer considered necessary. The design on the front cover of this paperback edition is of the head and shoulders of a fugitive man, wearing a broad-brimmed hat with a band and having his coat collar turned up. This picture has a two strand circular rope frame, joined by knots top and bottom to single strand rope bordered rectangles containing the title and author's name and the publisher's name respectively. The background is pink.

After acquiring the four Ellis titles from The C. C. Thompson Company Donohue used the attractive Camp-Fire Series format for reprints of "The Life of Kit Carson" and "The Star of India," as well as for "Red Plume." On this occasion the abbreviated title, "Kit Carson," appears on the milk chocolate brown cover and the title page is for "The Life of Kit Carson." The probable publication series edition retained the title, "Kit Carson" on the front cover, whilst reverting to the Flashlight Series title page. The spine of this edition features a motif of two rifles, two pistols and a cartridge belt. The front cover has a picture of a youth in frontier garb, wearing a pork pie hat and carrying a rifle in his right hand, pointing downwards and pressed against his body at the butt by his right arm. He is facing away from the reader towards a background of mountains. The author's name appears as S. Ellis and the cover cloth color is milk chocolate brown. So far as can be ascertained the probable publication date of this edition was either during the First World War or shortly afterwards.

The Boys' Elite Series edition has the same format as The Peerless Series edition, but with the title page changed back to that used for the 1913/1914 edition. An advertisement at the back of a copy of this edition, which was presented to the Rogers Collection by that doyen of our hobby, Ralph Cummings, many years ago, misprints the author's name as Edward L. Ellis. That copy is bound in a deep gray cover cloth and contains a gift inscription including the year 1925. A study of the advertisements at the back produced no firm conclusions as to the probable publication date of this edition, but did indicate 1925 to have been as likely a year as any.

Grosset and Dunlap : New York

In the Personal Notes section of The Publishers Weekly for 21 January, 1899 (No. 1408) George T. Dunlap is recorded as having been for a number of years with The American Publishers Corporation and as about to represent Rand, McNally & Company on the road, based on that firm's New York office.

A little over a year later (Publishers Weekly No. 1477 : 19 May 1900) the first known advertisement of Grosset & Dunlap appeared. On the not unreasonable assumption that George T. Dunlap was the Dunlap of Grosset & Dunlap, we can deduce that Alex Grosset & Company became Grosset & Dunlap either during 1899 or early in 1900.

The firm's connection with The Merston Complex began with the acquisition of publication rights for nine tales by Edward S. Ellis. The exact date of acquisition is uncertain, but the reader is referred to the section of this article about The A. L. Chatterton Company for the background data. 1911 looks the most likely year to me. Anyway Grosset & Dunlap published two different editions of the eight fiction titles and, so far as is known, only one edition of "The Life of Kit Carson." The three formats are now described.

The format used for all the fiction titles issued by Grosset & Dunlap

under the catalogue title, The Edward S. Ellis Series, has the full face head and shoulders of a boy, wearing a sweater and cap, within a domed doorway frame below the title at the top of the spine and immediately above an ornament shaped like a handleless cup. The front cover picture within a domed framework is of a boy reclining on the rails of a steamer, reading a book. The color of the cover cloth is carmine red.

The special format used for "The Life of Kit Carson" has the profile of a man, facing left and wearing a coonskin cap. The front cover picture is of a frontiersman aiming his gun. He is crouched behind a rock. The design is in green, black and tan and the cover cloth color is beige.

After several years Grosset & Dunlap introduced The Alert Series, which sold for 40c per volume. A copy of "Young Captain Jack" by Horatio Alger Jr., in this series, which was acquired by our editor during a bookhunt last fall with the author of this article, had the dust wrapper intact. That wrapper established that The Alert Series comprised 30 titles by Horatio Alger Jr. (11), Capt. R. Bonehill (1), Edward S. Ellis (8), W. B. Foster (1), W. M. Grayson (1), Peter T. Harkness (1), Wm. D. Moffat (1), Roy Rockwood (4), M. White Jr. (1) and A. M. Winfield (1). From the advertisements of other series on the wrapper it has been possible to establish the probable publication date as 1915.

Another copy of The Alert Series edition of "Young Captain Jack" is known to exist, but no other titles have been located and so it is not possible to say whether the format was uniform for all the titles in the series; however, having regard to the cheap price, that seems more likely than otherwise to have been the case.

The format of "Young Captain Jack" has the title at the top and the author's name at the bottom of the front cover in black letters. In between the cover is split into three rectangles, of which those on the left and right have the design in black and the buff of the cover cloth against a red background and the center rectangle has its design in black on the buff of the cover cloth. The panel on the left depicts a youth with a rifle in his right hand and his left hand on his hip. The panel on the right depicts a youth wearing a suit and a straw hat and walking with a letter in his hand. The center panel has a vine arranged as a lyre with tendrils creeping over into the two other panels at the feet of the youths. At the center of the lyre motif there is a tent. The spine design is a full face head and shoulders of a young man, with well groomed hair, a stiff collared shirt, a red tie and a striped coat. This design is at the top and the author's name in the center with vertical and red stripes filling the rest of the spine, except for the publisher's name at the foot.

In conclusion I can commend The Mershon Complex as an excellent field for any "Round-Up" reader, who fancies an experiment with specialized book collecting. Many of the books published by these firms are still to be found in used bookstores and it is possible to adjust to one's own taste and means by concentrating on a single part or on several parts, if the whole complex looks too daunting.

This article owes much to bits and pieces of information and flashes of inspiration provided by many members of the Happy Hours Brotherhood in correspondence over a long period of years. I hope no one will feel slighted by this collective acknowledgement of invaluable assistance provided; I must make special mention, however, of Mr. Stanley A. Pachon of Bethlehem, Pa., whose background knowledge and clear thinking illuminated the way to fit the jigsaw puzzle pieces into a cohesive pattern.

The End

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